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BRAZIL AS AN INSTRUMENT OF WESTERN INFLUENCE IN AFRICA

1. An intense spirit of nationalism shared by virtually all the politically articulate is the predominant factor in Brazilian politics today. Brazilians are convinced that their country is fast becoming a world power, and as such is entitled to a voice in international affairs commensurate with its stature. A concomitant of this attitude is the demand for a more "independent" foreign policy, i.e., less automatic cooperation with the US in international matters. No political group in Brazil is strong enough to oppose this demand which, although it pre-dated the Quadros administration, has received much new impetus from the President. This memorandum suggests that it may be possible to guide Brazil's aspirations for the enhancement of its international prestige into channels beneficial to US interests both in Brazil and in Africa.

2. Brazil has unique qualifications for constructive relations with the Africans. There is a significant degree of interest in and sympathy for Brazil among West African leaders, particularly in the former French territories. Brazil's domestic racial policies are widely hailed by African politicians, and Brazil has racial and cultural ties with both West Africa and Portuguese Africa. Also, Brazil's struggle for economic development -- in many ways paralleling

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that of Africa -- is another important factor in the eyes of African leaders. Finally, as Brazil continues to develop its industries it will increasingly seek African markets as new outlets. It already seeks good relations with the Africans to encourage the latter's association with Latin American states in international coffee commodity agreements for mutual benefits.

3. In terms of US interests, the Brazilian economic model -- rapid development under a free economy -- provides a sharp contrast and a visible alternative to Soviet and Chinese Communist methods which have proved attractive to many African leaders. Moreover, Brazil is potentially another channel through which Western influence could flow to the neutralist Africans, who might, for one reason or another, shy away from intimate ties with the US. In addition, Brazil might offer an important opening wedge for constructive US ventures in Portuguese Africa. The Portuguese government has already offered to make its knowledge and experience in Africa available to Brazil.

4. Since taking office Janio Quadros has moved rapidly to pave the way for new Brazilian relationships with Africa. Thus far he has:

a. Indicated his belief that Brazil could assume the role of a "bridge" between the West and Africa. (This theme, incidentally,

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has received strong support in the Brazilian press during the past year.) The Foreign Minister is now speaking of an "Afro-Atlantic Community" in which Brazil would have a leading role.

b. Instructed his Foreign Minister to "elaborate" Brazilian policy vis-a-vis Africa. Quadros stated that the policy "must be re-examined" particularly with regard to its "political, economic, and cultural aspects."

c. Instructed the Foreign Minister to constitute a working group to prepare Brazilian diplomatic representation in the new African states. The Foreign Minister revealed that the working group will consider not only more missions but also ways and means of "integrating the African world with democracy."

d. Proposed a scholarship program to foster Brazilian relations with Africa, i.e., African students to study in Brazil (this despite Quadros austerity program).

5. Brazil's aspirations to become a world power exceed its current capabilities; it lacks financial assets for a comprehensive educational, social, and cultural program directed at the Africans. Nevertheless, by making Brazil feel that it is an important partner and confident of the US -- on an entirely equal basis -- in international relations, we can in some measure counter past feelings of resentment

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over alleged US neglect. The US could advance significantly Brazil's international prestige by providing funds to Brazil for a large-scale African scholarship program which Brazilian universities could easily handle. Beyond this example, however, a program involving Brazil as a "bridge" to Africa could be of considerable scope and might include aspects of work carried out by several US agencies, including ICA, USIA, State, and CIA. Nevertheless, US efforts to enlist Brazilian support in such a venture would have to be pursued discreetly in view of Quadros' sensitivities.

6. In this connection, "third countries" have been notably successful in forwarding US and Western interests in other areas, notably in Asia. There, the facilities, skills, and generally favorable political environment have been utilized by US government and private organizations for education and training programs designed to meet the needs of neutralist and friendly governments. Brazil's developing economy and modern society provide many opportunities to assist Africans in obtaining knowledge and skills required for the economic growth leading to stability in their new countries. Thus, a third country role for Brazil in relations to Africa would be helpful to the US in responding to Brazilian desires for a greater role in world affairs while at the same time advancing our own interests in Africa.

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